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Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/55/593)*]

55/59. Vienna Declaration on Crime and Justice: Meeting the Challenges of the Twenty-first Century

The General Assembly,

Recalling that, in its resolution 54/125 of 17 December 1999, it requested the Tenth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders to submit, through the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the Economic and Social Council, its declaration to the Millennium Assembly for consideration and action and requested the Commission to give priority attention at its ninth session to the conclusions and recommendations of the Tenth Congress, with a view to recommending, through the Economic and Social Council, appropriate follow-up by the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session,

Endorses the Vienna Declaration on Crime and Justice: Meeting the Challenges of the Twenty-first Century, adopted by the States Members of the United Nations and the other States participating in the high-level segment of the Tenth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders,[1] as contained in the annex to the present resolution.

81st plenary meeting
4 December 2000

Annex

Vienna Declaration on Crime and Justice: Meeting the Challenges of the Twenty-first Century

We the States Members of the United Nations,

Concerned about the impact on our societies of the commission of serious crimes of a global nature, and convinced of the need fo. bilateral, regional and international cooperation in crime prevention and criminal justice,

Concerned in particular about transnational organized crime and the relationships between its various forms,

[1] See *Tenth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, Vienna, 10–17 April 2000: report prepared by the Secretariat* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.00.IV.8).

Convinced that adequate prevention and rehabilitation programmes are fundamental to an effective crime control strategy and that such programmes should take into account social and economic factors that may make people more vulnerable to and likely to engage in criminal behaviour,

Stressing that a fair, responsible, ethical and efficient criminal justice system is an important factor in the promotion of economic and social development and of human security,

Aware of the promise of restorative approaches to justice that aim to reduce crime and promote the healing of victims, offenders and communities,

Having assembled at the Tenth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders in Vienna from 10 to 17 April 2000 to decide to take more effective concerted action, in a spirit of cooperation, to combat the world crime problem,

Declare as follows:

1. We note with appreciation the results of the regional preparatory meetings for the Tenth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders.[2]

2. We reaffirm the goals of the United Nations in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice, specifically the reduction of criminality, more efficient and effective law enforcement and administration of justice, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and promotion of the highest standards of fairness, humanity and professional conduct.

3. We emphasize the responsibility of each State to establish and maintain a fair, responsible, ethical and efficient criminal justice system.

4. We recognize the necessity of closer coordination and cooperation among States in combating the world crime problem, bearing in mind that action against it is a common and shared responsibility. In this regard, we acknowledge the need to develop and promote technical cooperation activities to assist States in their efforts to strengthen their domestic criminal justice systems and their capacity for international cooperation.

5. We shall accord high priority to the completion of the negotiation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the protocols thereto, taking into account the concerns of all States.

6. We support efforts to assist States in capacity-building, including in obtaining training and technical assistance and in developing legislation, regulations and expertise, with a view to facilitating the implementation of the Convention and the protocols thereto.

7. Consistent with the goals of the Convention and the protocols thereto, we shall endeavour:

(*a*) To incorporate a crime prevention component into national and international development strategies;

[2] See A/CONF.187/RPM.1/1 and Corr.1, A/CONF.187/RPM.2/1, A/CONF.187/RPM.3/1 and A/CONF.187/RPM.4/1.

(*b*) To intensify bilateral and multilateral cooperation, including technical cooperation, in the areas to be covered by the Convention and the protocols thereto;

(*c*) To enhance donor cooperation in areas with crime prevention aspects;

(*d*) To strengthen the capability of the United Nations Centre for International Crime Prevention, as well as the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme network, to assist States, at their request, in building capacity in areas to be covered by the Convention and the protocols thereto.

8. We welcome the efforts being made by the United Nations Centre for International Crime Prevention to develop, in cooperation with the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, a comprehensive global overview of organized crime as a reference tool and to assist Governments in policy and programme development.

9. We reaffirm our continued support for and commitment to the United Nations and to the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme, especially the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the United Nations Centre for International Crime Prevention, the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute and the institutes of the Programme network, and resolve to strengthen the Programme further through sustained funding, as appropriate.

10. We undertake to strengthen international cooperation in order to create a conducive environment for the fight against organized crime, promoting growth and sustainable development and eradicating poverty and unemployment.

11. We commit ourselves to taking into account and addressing, within the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme, as well as within national crime prevention and criminal justice strategies, any disparate impact of programmes and policies on women and men.

12. We also commit ourselves to the development of action-oriented policy recommendations based on the special needs of women as criminal justice practitioners, victims, prisoners and offenders.

13. We emphasize that effective action for crime prevention and criminal justice requires the involvement, as partners and actors, of Governments, national, regional, interregional and international institutions, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and various segments of civil society, including the mass media and the private sector, as well as the recognition of their respective roles and contributions.

14. We commit ourselves to the development of more effective ways of collaborating with one another with a view to eradicating the scourge of trafficking in persons, especially women and children, and the smuggling of migrants. We shall also consider supporting the global programme against trafficking in persons developed by the United Nations Centre for International Crime Prevention and the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, which is subject to close consultation with States and review by the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, and we establish 2005 as the target year for achieving a significant decrease in the incidence of those crimes worldwide and, where that is not attained, for assessing the actual implementation of the measures advocated.

15. We also commit ourselves to the enhancement of international cooperation and mutual legal assistance to curb illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition, and we establish 2005 as the target year for achieving a significant decrease in their incidence worldwide.

16. We further commit ourselves to taking enhanced international action against corruption, building on the United Nations Declaration against Corruption and Bribery in International Commercial Transactions,[3] the International Code of Conduct for Public Officials,[4] relevant regional conventions and regional and global forums. We stress the urgent need to develop an effective international legal instrument against corruption, independent of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, and we invite the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice to request the Secretary-General to submit to it at its tenth session, in consultation with States, a thorough review and analysis of all relevant international instruments and recommendations as part of the preparatory work for the development of such an instrument. We shall consider supporting the global programme against corruption developed by the United Nations Centre for International Crime Prevention and the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, which is subject to close consultation with States and review by the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.

17. We reaffirm that combating money-laundering and the criminal economy constitutes a major element of the strategies against organized crime, established as a principle in the Naples Political Declaration and Global Action Plan against Organized Transnational Crime, adopted by the World Ministerial Conference on Organized Transnational Crime, held at Naples, Italy, from 21 to 23 November 1994.[5] We are convinced that the success of this action rests upon setting up broad regimes and coordinating appropriate mechanisms to combat the laundering of the proceeds of crime, including the provision of support to initiatives focusing on States and territories offering offshore financial services that allow the laundering of the proceeds of crime.

18. We decide to develop action-oriented policy recommendations on the prevention and control of computer-related crime, and we invite the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice to undertake work in this regard, taking into account the ongoing work in other forums. We also commit ourselves to working towards enhancing our ability to prevent, investigate and prosecute high-technology and computer-related crime.

19. We note that acts of violence and terrorism continue to be of grave concern. In conformity with the Charter of the United Nations and taking into account all the relevant General Assembly resolutions, we shall together, in conjunction with our other efforts to prevent and to combat terrorism, take effective, resolute and speedy measures with respect to preventing and combating criminal activities carried out for the purpose of furthering terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. With this in view, we undertake to do our utmost to foster universal adherence to the international instruments concerned with the fight against terrorism.

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[3] Resolution 51/191, annex.

[4] Resolution 51/59, annex.

[5] A/49/748, annex, sect. I.A.

20. We also note that racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance continue, and we recognize the importance of taking steps to incorporate into international crime prevention strategies and norms measures to prevent and combat crime associated with racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance.

21. We affirm our determination to combat violence stemming from intolerance on the basis of ethnicity, and we resolve to make a strong contribution, in the area of crime prevention and criminal justice, to the planned World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance.

22. We recognize that the United Nations standards and norms in crime prevention and criminal justice contribute to efforts to deal with crime effectively. We also recognize the importance of prison reform, the independence of the judiciary and the prosecution authorities, and the International Code of Conduct for Public Officials. We shall endeavour, as appropriate, to use and apply the United Nations standards and norms in crime prevention and criminal justice in national law and practice. We undertake to review relevant legislation and administrative procedures, as appropriate, with a view to providing the necessary education and training to the officials concerned and ensuring the necessary strengthening of institutions entrusted with the administration of criminal justice.

23. We also recognize the value of the model treaties on international cooperation in criminal matters as important tools for the development of international cooperation, and we invite the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice to call upon the United Nations Centre for International Crime Prevention to update the *Compendium of United Nations Standards and Norms in Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice*[6] in order to provide the most up-to-date versions of the model treaties to States seeking to utilize them.

24. We further recognize with great concern that juveniles in difficult circumstances are often at risk of becoming delinquent or easy candidates for recruitment by criminal groups, including groups involved in transnational organized crime, and we commit ourselves to undertaking countermeasures to prevent this growing phenomenon and to including, where necessary, provisions for juvenile justice in national development plans and international development strategies and to including the administration of juvenile justice in our funding policies for development cooperation.

25. We recognize that comprehensive crime prevention strategies at the international, national, regional and local levels must address the root causes and risk factors related to crime and victimization through social, economic, health, educational and justice policies. We urge the development of such strategies, aware of the proven success of prevention initiatives in numerous States and confident that crime can be reduced by applying and sharing our collective expertise.

26. We commit ourselves to according priority to containing the growth and overcrowding of pre-trial and detention prison populations, as appropriate, by promoting safe and effective alternatives to incarceration.

27. We decide to introduce, where appropriate, national, regional and international action plans in support of victims of crime, such as mechanisms for

[6] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.92.IV.1 and corrigendum.

mediation and restorative justice, and we establish 2002 as a target date for States to review their relevant practices, to develop further victim support services and awareness campaigns on the rights of victims and to consider the establishment of funds for victims, in addition to developing and implementing witness protection policies.

28. We encourage the development of restorative justice policies, procedures and programmes that are respectful of the rights, needs and interests of victims, offenders, communities and all other parties.

29. We invite the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice to design specific measures for the implementation of and follow-up to the commitments that we have undertaken in the present Declaration.